

PRESS RELEASE

Two Finalists Named for Early Education and Care Commissioner Role

The Board of Early Education and Care will interview finalists next week

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Executive Office of Education

Department of Early Education and Care

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BOSTON — The Board of Early Education and Care today announced two finalists in its search for a new Commissioner of Early Education and Care, wrapping up a three-month search that yielded local and national candidates for this position. The Board plans to

interview the candidates at a public meeting next Tuesday, June 4, and could possibly vote to choose the next commissioner.

The two finalists are Samantha Aigner-Treworgy, who is currently the chief of early learning for the City of Chicago, and Cliff Chuang, senior associate commissioner at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Early Education and Care Commissioner Tom Weber announced in March he was stepping down, after more than a decade of service in senior roles within the Education Secretariat. Weber has served as Commissioner of Early Education and Care for six years, the longest serving commissioner for the department. Commissioner Weber will conclude his service by June 30.

The Board of Early Education and Care, led by Chair Nonie Lesaux, launched a national search to identify a successor to Weber. Once the board votes to recommend a candidate for the commissioner position, the recommendation is submitted to the Secretary of Education, James Peyser, for his approval and appointment. The Secretary sits on the Board of Early Education and Care. The Board will interview the two candidates at EEC headquarters at 51 Sleeper Street, Boston, starting at 12 p.m.

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) licenses approximately 9,000 child care programs and provides financial assistance for more than 56,000 children to attend high-quality learning programs that support their growth and development.

“I want to thank Chair Lesaux and the search committee for their great work in recruiting and screening a national pool of candidates on behalf of the full board,” **Education Secretary James Peyser said.**

“This is an opportunity for the public to hear from the candidates and learn about their experience, qualifications, and interest in leading the important work of the department and its mission to support the best outcomes for Massachusetts’ children at a particularly pivotal moment in time for the agency and the field,” **said Early Education and Care Board Chair Nonie Lesaux.**

About Samantha Aigner-Treworgy:

Samantha Aigner-Treworgy is currently the chief of early learning for the City of Chicago, where she is leading implementation of the city's early childhood plan to provide universal full-day pre-kindergarten to all four-year-old children in the city. She led the rollout of a family portal and universal preschool online application aimed at reducing barriers for families to access early learning programs. She also created a \$4 million Chicago Early Learning Scholarship program to recruit new teachers into the workforce.

Ms. Aigner-Treworgy oversees approximately \$350 million in early childhood funding across multiple city agencies, including coordination of birth-to-five services in schools, community-based organizations and home visiting programs.

Prior to working for the City of Chicago, she was the national policy manager at Ounce of Prevention Fund – a nonprofit focused on expanding early childhood learning opportunities for low-income children. At Ounce of Prevention she launched a national policy initiative focused on supporting school districts to effectively implement early learning strategies in collaboration with local communities. From 2012 to 2013, she was a special projects coordinator for the Chicago Public Schools where she oversaw the implementation of a sliding-scale fee in school-based preschool programs to expand access and maximize public funding.

Early in her career, she was a pre-kindergarten teacher and teaching coach in Evanston, IL. She holds a Master's in social service administration and a Master's in public policy from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Smith College in Northampton, MA.

About Cliff Chuang:

Cliff Chuang, a former Boston Public Schools math and science teacher, is currently the Senior Associate Commissioner for Educational Options at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Mr. Chuang is on the Commissioner's executive senior team and has worked to expand access to a wide-range of educational options, including charter schools, virtual schools, adult education, recovery high schools, career technical education, early college programs, and out-of-school time programs. He also oversees student and family support initiatives, the early learning team, and strategies to support

social-emotional learning, health and safety. Recently, he helped secure private grant funding to launch Influence 100, a new initiative to increase racial and ethnic diversity of school superintendents in Massachusetts.

Mr. Chuang served as the school redesign coordinator for DESE from 2009 to 2011, and during that time was primary author and key policy developer who helped the Commonwealth secure a \$59 million federal school turnaround grant. From 2011 to 2012 he served as director of the Charter School Office for the New York State Education Department where he directed the development of the New York State Board of Regents' policies and 2011-2016 strategic plan for charter schools before returning to Massachusetts in 2012 to become associate commissioner for educational redesign at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Mr. Chuang currently serves as a mentor/supervisor for the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Doctor of Educational Leadership (Ed.L.D) program, and previously served as board president of Chinatown ACCESS, a Boston non-profit serving immigrant families. He graduated from Harvard University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics and completed the undergraduate teacher education program. He holds a Master's in education in mathematics secondary teaching from Boston College.

About the Board of Early Education and Care:

The Board of Early Education and Care sets policies and regulations related to early education and care programs and services in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and is comprised of eleven members, two of whom are ex-officio and nine of whom are appointed by the Governor. The Board of Early Education and Care is chaired by Nonie Lesaux, Ph.D., Juliana W. and William Foss Thompson Professor of Education and Society, and academic dean at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

About the Department of Early Education and Care:

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the lead agency for early learning programs and services in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is part of the Executive Office of Education, one of nine Executive Offices under Governor Charlie Baker.

EEC licenses child care programs, residential programs, and adoption/foster care placement agencies; and provides information and referral services, inclusive

programming for children with special needs, parenting and family support, and professional development opportunities for early educators. EEC's mission is to provide a system of early education and care and out-of-school time in Massachusetts that provides all children with the necessary foundation for healthy and positive educational development and lifelong success. For more information about the Department of Early Education and Care, please visit: [https://www.mass.gov/eec \(/eec\)](https://www.mass.gov/eec (/eec)).

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Executive Office of Education (</orgs/executive-office-of-education>)

From pre-school to post-secondary education, the Executive Office of Education works to connect all Massachusetts residents with an education that creates opportunities.

While Massachusetts' students rank first in the nation on many educational measures, the Executive Office of Education strives to strengthen the foundations of education reform, empower schools and educators, and develop pathways to

college and careers so all students in the Commonwealth can succeed, regardless of their zip code.

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Department of Early Education and Care

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The Department of Early Education and Care's mission is to support the healthy growth and development of all children by providing high quality programs and resources for families and communities.

More (</orgs/department-of-early-education-and-care>)

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